

# In the News

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

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## Message from the Mayor

Hundreds of citizens joined me for various events throughout the District of Columbia on August 5 — celebrating National Night Out Against Crime. National Night Out is one night every year, but it symbolizes something much bigger: a community effort to work with our police to prevent crime every day.

On National Night Out, citizens from our city and from around the country gathered in various communities and took a stand against crime. Here in the District, we have some major challenges ahead of us when it comes to crime, and my hope is that we can face them together.

The facts are simple: although our city's homicide rate is up about 9 percent from this time last year, the homicide closure rate is moving in the right direction. As I write this, the closure rate is 51 percent. At this time last year, it was 48.9 percent. This is a testament to the progress our Metropolitan Police Department is making. To help increase this rate even more, Chief Ramsey and I recently announced an increase in the homicide reward fund from \$10,000 to \$25,000.

Overall crime is up by about 2 percent compared with this time last year — so the importance of police and community working together has never been greater. My vision for public safety is simple. I want us to help foster a real sense of community — a place where citizens can depend on, trust and work with our officers.

We are working hard to level the playing field as it relates to jobs, housing, and health care. And we are looking to new concepts like REACH (Restoring Ex-offenders and At Risk youth with Community Based Services and Healthy Living), a collaboration of grassroots organizations committed to restoring the family — to assist in providing returning offenders with the support networks they need.

Our MPD also has a new "Gang Intervention Partnership" to combat Latino gang violence in Columbia Heights and other communities. The Partnership is focused specifically on reducing gang violence in these targeted communities. The goal of the Gang Intervention Partnership is to reduce gang violence — both short-term and long-term — through a combination of enforcement, intervention and prevention strategies.

Law enforcement efforts are focusing on the identification, apprehension, arrest and prosecution of individuals actively involved in gang violence.

Personnel from the Third and Fourth Police Districts, as well as the Gang Intelligence Section, Office of Youth Violence Prevention, and the Latino Liaison Unit, many of whom are bilingual in English and Spanish, are leading the enforcement efforts. Intervention efforts include enhanced information sharing among Partnership members and community-based conflict resolution and mediation targeting active gangs and gang members.

As always, our main objective is stopping crime before it happens. To reach our goal, we must work together.



## AGENCY WEBSITES

[Office of Tax and Revenue](#)

[Department of Parks and Recreation](#)

[Department of Employment Services](#)

[Metropolitan Police Department](#)

[Office of Boards and Commissions](#)

[Commission on the Arts and Humanities](#)

# Postal Service Announces District of Columbia Stamp

Two weeks ago, I joined Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton and officials from the U.S. Postal Service at the unveiling of the new commemorative District of Columbia postage stamp. The historic Lincoln Theatre served as the backdrop for this exciting announcement.

Last year, after the U.S. Postal Service issued its collection of 50 state commemorative stamps, Congresswoman Norton asked that the District also have its own stamp. She worked with the Postal Service to assure a flavorful hometown design instead of one focusing only on our city's monuments, which is typical of postcards.

The stamp, which is scheduled to be issued for sale in September, includes an identifiable depiction of the Shaw neighborhood in Northwest. This is the first time the city and its residents have been recognized with a D.C. hometown stamp. The whole world can now see that the District is more than just monuments and museums. From Northeast to Southwest, from Anacostia to Tenleytown, we represent a rich history of active and engaged citizens who make me proud to be Mayor.

It's symbolic that the District neighborhood recognized on this stamp is Shaw — an area we've focused on for our revitalization efforts. Shaw and U Street signify the District of Columbia's resilience and rich history. Shaw represents the past, but it also embodies the best of the present: planned revitalization and economic development that serve our people.

For more information about the stamp, please visit the US Postal Service on the internet, at [www.usps.gov](http://www.usps.gov).



Mayor Williams and Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton unveil new postage stamp for the District

## Employee Profile

### Maisie Hughes

Thanks to the work of Maisie Hughes, who is with the District Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR), more District youth are environmentally aware than ever. Working out of the Robert F. Lederer Youth Garden and Environmental Education Center, Maisie serves as a recreation specialist in the Environmental Education Services section of DPR.

Maisie is the coordinator for much of the department's nature programming, including Camp Natural Fun, Club Natural Fun and Natural Leaders. "I chose environmental education as a career because I have always been interested in the environment, particularly the social aspects as far as how environmental issues disproportionately impact the disadvantaged," Maisie said.

Maisie graduated from Howard University in 2001 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Afro-American studies. This fall, she plans to begin graduate studies in landscape architecture at Morgan State University.

In January 2002, Maisie was hired by DPR as a recreation specialist. After working with the department, Maisie noticed a programming void — a niche that the current services didn't cover. So, in October 2002, she created the Natural Leaders Program, which offers children 12 years and older volunteer, mentoring and job placement opportunities within environmental fields.

The children spend the school year learning environmental principles and peer teaching techniques, performing clean-ups and honing job search skills. During the summer, the Natural Leaders are employed as junior counselors at DPR's environmental education camps. Natural Leader projects this summer include a boat construction program with the Earth Conservation Corps; planting wild rice with the Anacostia Watershed Society as part of a restoration project for Anacostia River; and, various clean-ups and tree planting projects.

"Because of its increased population and its unique topography, urban areas have a profound affect on the environment," Maisie said. "The people who live in the city are generally the most removed from the environment. The idea is to reconnect people in the urban settings with nature so that they can understand what needs to be protected."

Maisie hopes more District agencies realize the direct correlation between nature-based services and improved quality of life. "I have always been a firm believer that regardless of income or status, we all deserve to be surrounded by beauty," she said. Thanks, Maisie, for doing your job so well!



Maisie Hughes



LINK TO OTHER  
WEBSITES

[DC Agenda](#)

[Hands on DC](#)

[DC Convention  
and Tourism](#)

[DC Public Library](#)

## DC WASA Launches New Skimmer Boat

In the heat of the summer on August 6, I attended a unique event on the Anacostia River recognizing the launch of a new "skimmer boat" that will help clean up the District of Columbia's waterways. Operated by the DC Water and Sewer Authority (WASA), the boat is another example of how our city is committed to our local environment.

A few years ago, I began my campaign for Mayor on the banks of the magnificent Anacostia River. The Anacostia River is one of our city's most undervalued natural resources — and it must be reconnected to the city that rests upon its shores.

When I think of the Anacostia River, I think of its natural beauty. I think of a place firmly imbedded in our city's history. I think of this beauty and history coming together in a place where our residents live, work and play. This can be a magnificent waterfront for families from across the city. We can be one of the great waterfront cities of the world!

The commissioning of the new trash skimmer boat reflects DC WASA's continuing environmental commitment — namely to the Anacostia River. WASA's trash skimmer boats will remove floatable debris from all of the District's waterways but will enable WASA to especially focus on the Anacostia River. This is one step, but it's an important one in helping achieve my vision for revitalizing the Anacostia waterfront.

The skimmer boats are the backbone of the Floatable Debris Removal program and a key component of WASA's solid and floatables control program. By making our waterways cleaner, they add to my efforts to make Washington, DC a cleaner, more attractive city for residents and visitors.

Skimmer boats have removed more than 3,000 tons of debris from the District's waters in recent years. They keep the waters clean by removing trash from all sources (litter, upstream sources, storm water) in addition to combined sewer overflow. Citizens can do their part by taking personal responsibility for the treatment of the Anacostia and other waterways and not using them for waste disposal.

## Youth Leadership Institute Engages Young People in Civic Training

On August 4, I joined a host of our city's young people for a unique program at George Washington University in Northwest. During the program, I engaged in a conversation with summer youth employment participants in the Mayor's Youth Leadership Institute.

This year, approximately 9,000 youth registered for the Summer Youth Employment Program. A total of 5,275 youth, ages 14 to 21, worked at a variety of jobs located throughout the city. This summer, 428 young people worked in private sector jobs. I'm proud to say that given our limited resources, we achieved our goals for a productive and fruitful summer for many of our young people who will emerge from this summer with positive reflections on their time spent working toward various goals.

The Mayor's Youth Leadership Institute is made up of 175 youth ages 14 to 18. For the past five weeks, these hardworking youngsters have been engaged in numerous leadership development training activities. Four of these young people are currently campaigning to be the new Youth Mayor of the District.

More often than not, when I'm invited to meet with a group, I do all of the talking. But this program gave me an opportunity to hear from the youth of our city. It was refreshing and informative to listen to them.

I need all of our city's youngsters to get involved and stay involved in their schools, their churches, and in community organizations. Typically, when they get involved, they find that their single voice can make a difference in our community.



# National Capital Region Homeland Security Summit

Homeland security remains at the forefront of the issues we confront in Washington, DC. One of the most critical components is ensuring that local regions work together — because that's where security really begins. On August 5, I joined Department of Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge, Maryland Lt. Gov. Michael Steele and Virginia Homeland Security Director John Hager to mark the first anniversary of the National Capital Region Homeland Security Summit.

Our preparedness efforts begin at the local level — with citizens, first responders, and many others in local government. Following the attacks of September 11, 2001, we as a nation realized the changing face of emergency response. We have continued to build upon the leadership and experience of men and women in traditional first responder roles. Every day, we learn more about technology, transportation, public works, donations and volunteer management, and other disciplines.



Mayor Williams joined Virginia Security Director John H. Hager, Maryland Lt. Gov. Michael Steele and other officials for a meeting on regional homeland security on August 5 in Northwest.

Most of all, we need strong leadership and true partnership to integrate these disciplines quickly — and locally. The National Capital Region is home to millions of residents, tens of millions of tourists annually, the federal government and many of our military forces. My colleagues from Maryland and Virginia and I, with support from the Department of Homeland Security, agreed to sign eight "Commitments to Action."

These commitments include:

- Terrorism Prevention
- Citizen Involvement in Preparedness
- Decision Making and Coordination
- Emergency Protective Measures
- Infrastructure Protection
- Media Relations and Communications
- Mutual Aid
- Training and Exercises

The District is proud to be a member of this partnership and proud of what we have accomplished in the past 12 months. This partnership has enabled us to collaborate in our planning and in our operations. And we continue that collaboration today and into the future.

## Mayor's Week In Review

During the week of August 4, I conducted many productive meetings and attended a number of events, including the ones listed below. I hope you'll help keep track of my weekly progress by reading this review each week:

- On **August 4**, I met with the Mayor's Youth Leadership Institute, comprised of 175 youth ages 14 to 18. For the past five weeks, they have been engaged in a number of leadership development training activities. We had an exciting discussion about youth issues.
- On **August 5**, I delivered brief remarks at the opening of The Avalon at Gallery Place — a new housing development near the MCI Center.
- On **August 5**, I joined Secretary Ridge, Maryland Lt. Gov. Michael Steele and Virginia's John Hager to mark the first anniversary of the National Capital Region Homeland Security Summit. We discussed homeland security and preparedness in the NCR and shared our thoughts on the progress made over the past year and challenges that lie ahead.
- On **August 5**, I joined citizens and Metropolitan Police Department officers for a celebration of the National Night Out Against Crime.
- On **August 6**, I delivered remarks at the launch of DC Water and Sewer Authority's trash skimmer boat, which will remove floatable debris from all of the District's waterways but will enable WASA to especially focus on the Anacostia River. This is but one step, but an important one, in helping achieve my vision for improving the Anacostia waterfront.
- On **August 7**, I appeared as a guest on WPGC's "Community Focus" radio show with David Haines.
- On **August 8**, I delivered remarks before more than 650 youth from the District of Columbia and around the nation who gathered in Washington, D.C. to participate in the Tavis Smiley Foundation Youth to Leaders National Summit.



## District Activities



Mayor Williams delivers remarks at opening of the new apartment community Avalon at Gallery Place in downtown Washington.



Mayor Williams took part in "National Night Out Against Crime" activities on August 5. The kick-off took place at Fort Stanton Rec Center at 18<sup>th</sup> and Erie Streets, SE.

## Community News

- [DOH Reaches Consent Agreement with Greater Southeast Community Hospital](#)
- [DPR Announces Mayor's Cup Boxing Competition in DC](#)
- [DC Public School Students Required to Get Immunization Shots](#)

[View all News Releases](#)

## Upcoming Events

- |             |   |
|-------------|---|
| <b>8/16</b> | <b>Adult Literacy Festival and Recruitment Fair</b><br>10 am - 3 pm<br>Vermont Avenue, NW between R and 11th Streets<br>For more information, call (202) 234-BOOK |
| <b>8/23</b> | <b>40th Anniversary of the "March on Washington"</b><br>9 am<br>Lincoln Memorial grounds on National Mall<br>For more information, call (202) 544-8026            |
| <b>9/4</b>  | <b>Elderfest 2003</b><br>10 am - 3 pm<br>Between 13th and 14th Streets on Pennsylvania Avenue, NW<br>Freedom Plaza  |

[View the Mayor's daily schedule](#)

